

SPORTS



Cpl. Thomas Perry
Lieutenant William Nguyen, a physician at the Branch Medical Clinic, performs a shoulder press at the Combat Fitness Center Dec. 4, the fourth day of the 12 Days of Fitness Challenge. Nguyen said that the most difficult day of training so far was the Ab Attack class. The challenge ends Tuesday.

CPL. THOMAS PERRY
STAFF WRITER

Two Marine Corps Community Services-South Carolina Semper Fit employees, whose lives are ruled by good health and exercise, have begun a personal crusade to enhance the overall strength, health and endurance of all Depot service members and their families wanting to slim down and shape up for the holidays.

Cynthia May, the Depot fitness specialist and program coordinator, and Michele Brittingham, a MCCS-SC fitness instructor and personal trainer, began the MCCS-SC 12 Days of Fitness Challenge Dec. 1. Fourteen Marines and sailors accepted the challenge and watched their lunchtime transform from an hour of peace into an hour of physical turmoil.

“The program’s overall focus is to contribute to the health and well-being of every Marine through regular exercise, fitness readiness and motivation,” said May, who also offers a personal training program for interested service members. “The 12 Days of Fitness will improve quality of movement. The program also improves

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- Lt. William Nguyen, a physician at the Branch Medical Clinic, who normally works out six days a week

posture, balance and stability, agility, coordination, power, speed and flexibility.”

The physical benefits are reason enough to endure the 12 challenging workouts, but May believes that there are many other benefits of regular exercise that people often overlook.

“Benefits also include an improved memory, a better on-the-job performance, less stress, lower blood pressure, stronger bones, better sleep, a lowered risk of coronary heart disease and a lower cholesterol,” said May. “Plus, you are likely to lose fat and keep weight off.”

As the benefits of the program begin to mount, a real understanding of why these two women orchestrated this program becomes clear, but the 12 Days of Fitness may never have breached the shores of Parris Island had it not been for

a timely trip to Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C.

“The idea came from Camp Lejeune,” explained May. “They offer a PFT/PFA Coordinator Course that we implemented after Michele attended and participated in the circuit and running programs. We are trying to offer it as an alternative to Depot personnel’s normal PT.”

May acknowledged that most service members maintain some form of daily physical training with their sections, but she believes that it is not always enough to reach top physical standards.

“As a rule, most unit physical training consists of endurance and cardiovascular,” said May. “Strengthening is seldom done. The circuits provide all three. They require little to no equipment, which makes them very

mobile and gives us the ability to go to any unit and provide training.”

The 12-day challenge involves various workouts including three Ab Attack classes, two pool circuits, two outdoor circuits, two gym circuits, two days of running and a spinning class. May and Brittingham believe the varied workouts better prepare service members for their physical fitness tests.

“We are trying to add another element to better prepare them,” said Brittingham. “Most Marines that we talked to don’t believe that their physical training involves enough muscle strengthening.”

According to participants, muscle strengthening has not been overlooked during the 12 Days of Fitness.

“It is a different kind of workout,” said Lt. William Nguyen, a physician at the Branch Medical Clinic, who normally works out six days a week. “[Brittingham] is intense. It is all about strength and endurance. It has been really challenging.”

For more information on upcoming programs or to set up a meeting with a personal trainer, call May at 228-1562.

MWSS-273 knocks off NHB 47-38

CPL. ALISHA R. FITZGERALD
STAFF WRITER

MWSS-273 defeated the Naval Hospital 47-38 in the Marine Corps Community Services-South Carolina Intramural Basketball League at the Air Station’s Paul L. Siegmund Fitness Complex Dec. 4.

The win, which improved MWSS-273’s record to 3-3, was decided in the final minutes.

Free throws played a key role since the score remained close throughout the game, according to Deon Farmer, a forward and assistant coach for MWSS-273.

“We had a lot of scorers who came off the bench, and our

guards stepped up to the challenge,” he said.

Farmer said after the first few weeks of the season, he feels his team has some work to do in order to be a top contender in the league.

“We need to work on the simple things, like boxing out and rotating on defense,” he said.

Farmer and four other players who played on the team last year are anxious about getting the opportunity to go to the playoffs this year, since the team had to withdraw last season because most were deployed to Iraq.

The Hospital finished last year’s intramural season 11-0, but also lost players to Operation Iraqi Freedom just before the playoffs, causing the team to be

eliminated in round two.

This year, the Hospital is playing with half of its usual roster, as the team dwindled from about 14 to eight. They sunk to 1-2 after the loss to MWSS, which Head Coach Harry Barnes attributed to a lack of focus.

“It was a tough game and there were a few questionable calls, which threw the emotion of the game,” he said. “We have to stay non-emotional and focused.”

Despite the slow start this season, Hospital players have not been disheartened. Before the league began, they played in a civilian league where they ended the regular season 0-9, but came back to finish third in the playoffs.

“It’s still early,” said Barnes. “As long as we stay focused and play Naval Hospital basketball, we’ll be fine.”

Barnes explained that one of his key players is currently away playing with the All-Navy team, which is having an impact on the team’s performance.

“He’s good for at least 15 points and five rebounds,” he said. “Plus, he’s a great defender. We’re not bad now, but he’ll help us improve.”

Barnes promised by playoff time, his team would be in top form.

“We’ll definitely be a contender for the championship,” he said. “We’re getting better and we’ll hold on and maintain. We just have to focus.”